

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8181
INFO DA WASHDC
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AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

TOKYO FOR AMBASSADOR ABRAMOWITZ

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, MPOL, TH, US
SUBJECT: INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE

REF 1. STATE 167901

SUMMARY: CONTINUED SECURITY ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP WITH THAILAND SERVES A NUMBER OF U.S. INTERESTS IN THAILAND AND THE REGION, PRIMARILY THE SECURITY AND STABILITY OF THAILAND AND ITS ASEAN NEIGHBORS. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS SUPPORTIVE OF A SECURITY ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP INCLUDE NARCOTICS AND REFUGEE PROBLEMS, U.S. TRADE AND INVESTMENT

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AND U.S. SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE COOPERATION. GENERALLY, WE FEEL U.S. INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES IN THAILAND AND THE REGION JUSTIFY MAINTENANCE OF AT LEAST PRESENT LEVELS OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS AND, OPTIMALLY, SLIGHT INCREASES THAT WOULD AT MINIMUM COMPENSATE FOR INFLATION. SPECIFIC QUESTIONS/ITEMS CONTAINED REFTEL ARE DISCUSSED BELOW. END SUMMARY.

1. U.S. INTERESTS. BASIC TO U.S. INTERESTS HERE AND IN THE REGION IS THE MAINTENANCE OF THAILAND AS AN INDEPENDENT, NON-COMMUNIST, ESSENTIALLY PRO-WESTERN STATE. THAILAND IS THE LINCHPIN TO PEACE AND SECURITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. CONNECTED DIRECTLY TO ITS FATE IS THE SECURITY OF ASEAN COUNTRIES AND, IN THAT CONTEXT, MAJOR TRADE AND COMMUNICATIONS LINKS IMPORTANT TO JAPAN.

2. WITHOUT THAILAND'S COOPERATION, U.S. EFFORTS TO STEM THE FLOW OF NARCOTICS FROM THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE WOULD BE FRUSTRATED. THAILAND, IS THE HAVEN OF OVER 100,000 INDOCHINESE REFUGEES. ITS COOPERATION IS CRUCIAL TO OUR EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH THE INDOCHINA REFUGEE PROBLEM IN A HUMANE AND JUST MANNER. THE U.S. RANKS SECOND AFTER JAPAN AS THAILAND'S LARGEST TRADING PARTNER. THE EXPLOITATION OF THAILAND'S SIGNIFICANT OFF SHORE NATURAL GAS RESOURCES OVER THE NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS WILL MEAN HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF SALES AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY TO U.S. BUSINESS.

3. THE U.S. RETAINS CERTAIN ACCESS PRIVILEGES FOR THE TRANSIT OF MAC AND P-3 FLIGHTS WHICH, UNDER THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, COULD PROBABLY BE EXPANDED RAPIDLY IF REQUIRED. THE RTG PROVIDES IMPORTANT COOPERATION IN GATHERING INTELLIGENCE PERTINENT TO OUR INTERESTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN.

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4. OUR SECURITY ASSISTANCE OBJECTIVES RELATE DIRECTLY TO THE ABOVE DESCRIBED INTERESTS. WE HOPE TO ASSIST THE THAI MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT TO DEVELOP AND SUPPORT A FORCE THAT POSES A CREDIBLE DETERRENT TO ADVENTURISM BY THAILAND'S COMMUNIST NEIGHBORS AND THAT IS ABLE TO MEET THE MILITARY CHALLENGE OF THE INTERNAL INSURGENCY. IN SO DOING, WE CONTRIBUTE TO THAILAND'S AND REGIONAL SECURITY AND STABILITY. OUR SECURITY ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP WITH THAILAND IS SUPPORTIVE OF OTHER U.S. OBJECTIVES--THAI COOPERATION IN DEALING WITH NARCOTICS AND REFUGEE PROBLEMS WHICH ARE OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE TO US, PROMOTION OF U.S. TRADE AND INVESTMENT, AND THE MAINTENANCE OF SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE RELATIONSHIPS BENEFICIAL TO THE U.S. INDEED, SECURITY ASSISTANCE IS VIEWED BY THE RTG AS A MAJOR INDICATOR OF OUR OWN ATTITUDE TOWARD THAILAND AS WELL AS AN ESSENTIAL SOURCE OF NEEDED MILITARY EQUIPMENT. ONE OF THE RESULTS OF MAINTAINING A SECURITY ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP WITH THAILAND AND OTHER FRIENDLY NATIONS IN THE AREA WILL BE TO LEND GREATER CREDENCE TO OUR STATED DETERMINATION TO REMAIN A PACIFIC POWER.

5. THREAT. THAILAND CONTINUES TO VIEW VIETNAM AS ITS PRIMARY EXTERNAL THREAT, ALTHOUGH IN A SOMEWHAT LONGER TERM CONTEXT THAN IT DID A YEAR OR SO AGO. A MORE IMMEDIATELY PRESSING THREAT TO THE NATION'S SECURITY IN THE THAI VIEW IS THE COMMUNIST INSURGENCY WITHIN THAILAND WHICH CONTINUES TO RECEIVE SIGNIFICANT EXTERNAL SUPPORT ACROSS THAILAND'S LONG AND POROUS BORDERS WITH LAOS AND CAMBODIA. THAILAND HAS ADOPTED UNDER ITS PRESENT LEADERSHIP A FLEXIBLE DIPLOMACY AS THE PRIMARY STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH THE EXTERNAL THREAT WHILE ATTEMPTING TO MODERNIZE AND DEVELOP ITS ARMED FORCES INTO

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A CREDIBLE DETERRENT TO VIETNAMESE OR OTHER EXTERNAL MILITARY ATTACK. AGAINST THE INTERNAL THREAT, THE RTG HAS EMPHASIZED POLITICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACHES TO DEAL WITH THE INSURGENCY WITH MILITARY OPERATIONS BEING USED SELECTIVELY TO COPE WITH THE ORGANIZED MILITARY OPERATIONS OF THE COMMUNISTS.

6. MISSION'S PERCEPTION. THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MISSION'S ESTIMATE OF THE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL THREATS TO THAILAND'S SECURITY AND THAI ESTIMATES. ESSENTIALLY, WE HAVE CONSIDERED THE DIRECT, MILITARY THREAT POSED BY VIETNAM AS LESS IMMEDIATE

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THAN THE THAI HAVE, WHILE RECOGNIZING THE NEED FOR THAILAND TO MAINTAIN A BALANCED, CREDIBLE, AND SUSTAINABLE FORCE STRUCTURE.

7. MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. TO MEET THE DUAL THREAT DESCRIBED ABOVE, THE THAI HAVE DEVELOPED BOTH A TRADITIONAL MILITARY ORGANIZATION DIVIDED INTO THREE ARMED SERVICES AND PARAMILITARY AND SPECIAL ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS, THE FORMER FOR DEALING WITH THE EXTERNAL THREAT IN THE FORM OF AN ARMED INVASION AND THE LATTER TO WORK WITH MILITARY UNITS TO DEAL WITH THE UNCONVENTIONAL, GUERRILLA WARFARE PRACTICED BY THE COMMUNIST INSURGENTS.

8. ASSESSMENT OF MILITARY FORCE. IN THE EVENT OF A SUDDEN, ALL-OUT ATTACK FROM VIETNAM, THE THAI MILITARY WOULD BE HARD PRESSED TO HOLD OFF FOR LONG A FORCE THAT IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED BETTER EQUIPPED, COMBAT HARDENED AND BETTER LED. IN MILITARY TERMS, THE RISK FOR VIETNAM IN UNDERTAKING SUCH AN ADVENTURE INCREASES AS THAILAND'S ARMED FORCES REPLACE OBSOLESCENT WEAPONS WITH MODERN SYSTEMS. A CONVENTIONAL, WELL-EQUIPPED AND SUSTAINABLE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT IN THAILAND SHOULD REDUCE THE DANGER OF OVERT ATTACK AND THEREBY CONTRIBUTE TO REGIONAL SECURITY AND STABILITY, A PRIME U.S. INTEREST. WE BELIEVE THERE IS WIDESPREAD ACCEPTANCE WITHIN THE THAI MILITARY OF THE VIEW THAT THE SOLUTION TO THE INSURGENCY DEMANDS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN AT LEAST EQUAL PROPORTIONS TO MILITARY OPERATIONS. THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOLUNTEER DEFENSE COMPANIES, VILLAGE DEFENSE CORPS, COMBINED CIVILIAN-MILITARY-POLICE TASK FORCES AND OTHER PARAMILITARY UNITS TO COMPLEMENT TRADITIONAL MILITARY ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS IN DEALING WITH THE INSURGENCY SEEMS TO BE A SENSIBLE

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APPROACH TO CONTAINING THIS PARTICULAR THREAT (ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN MUCH DUPLICATION, FOOT DRAGGING AND A NUMBER OF ILL-COORDINATED PROGRAMS IN THE OVERALL

GOVERNMENT EFFORT). U.S. INTERESTS ARE SERVED THROUGH THE ENHANCEMENT OF SECURITY AND STABILITY IN THAILAND AND THE REGION. WE DO NOT SEE ANY SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT ALTERNATIVES TO THE FLEXIBLE DEFENSE FORCES THAILAND IS ATTEMPTING TO DEVELOP TO DEAL WITH THE THREAT IT FACES.

9. DEFENSE SPENDING. DESPITE THE DOMINANT ROLE THE MILITARY HAS TRADITIONALLY PLAYED IN THAI POLITICS, DEFENSE SPENDING NORMALLY HAS REMAINED WITHIN REASONABLE LIMITS. THE MILITARY, SO FAR, HAS NOT GIVEN ITSELF A BLANK CHECK TO PURCHASE MILITARY HARDWARE AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHER NATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS. TO BE SURE, CIVILIAN ELEMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT, ESPECIALLY IN BUDGET AND FINANCE OFFICES, WOULD LIKE TO SEE A BETTER STRUCTURED AND SYSTEMATIC METHOD OF DECISION MAKING (READ GREATER INFLUENCE OVER DEFENSE SPENDING), BUT SO FAR SPENDING FOR DEFENSE NEEDS, WHICH IN THAILAND'S PRESENT SITUATION ARE REAL, HAS NOT SERIOUSLY Affected THE OVERALL ECONOMY. DEFENSE EXPENDITURES IN ABSOLUTE TERMS HAVE INCREASED OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, BUT IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT U.S. GRANT ASSISTANCE HAS DECREASED FROM \$90 MILLION IN FY 1972 TO ZERO FOR FY 1979. THE THAI MUST BUY THE HARDWARE TO SUPPLEMENT, SUPPORT AND REPLACE THAT WHICH THEY RECEIVED GRATIS FROM US IN THE PAST. NEVERTHELESS, DEFENSE EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENT OF BUDGET REMAINS UNDER 20 PERCENT AND REPRESENTS ABOUT 7 PERCENT OF GNP. IN TERMS OF IMPORTS, MILITARY ITEMS CONSTITUTED ABOUT 2.6 PERCENT OF TOTAL IMPORTS IN 1977. OBVIOUSLY, CASH PURCHASES OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT CONSTITUTE A DRAIN ON FOREIGN EXCHANGE, BUT DEBT SERVICING IS NOT YET A PROBLEM. IN OVERALL TERMS, THAILAND COULD HANDLE HIGHER FOREIGN

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DEBTS, ACCORDING TO THE MOST RECENT WORLD BANK REVIEW. BANGKOK 17659 CONTAINS A MORE DETAILED ASSESSMENT OF THIS QUESTION.

10. ASSESSMENT OF PROJECTED ACQUISITIONS (PARA 3A(8) REFTEL). THE MAJORITY OF ITEMS FOR PROJECTED PURCHASE FROM THE U.S. OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS ARE TO FILL MATERIAL UNIT AUTHORIZATION DEFICIENCIES. SMALL ARMS ARE REQUIRED TO OUTFIT THE RTMC; AN/PRC 77 RADIOS ARE IN CRITICALLY SHORT SUPPLY FOR SUPPORT OF THE RTA. VEHICLE PURCHASES PROJECTED WILL ONLY REPLACE THOSE WORN OUT IN SERVICE THAT WERE PREVIOUSLY PROVIDED UNDER MAP.

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COMMUNICATIONS/RADAR ARTICLES INTENDED TO REPLACE EXISTING SUBSYSTEMS CURRENTLY IN USE WILL PROVIDE MUCH NEEDED INCREASED COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITY. THE TOW MISSILE SYSTEM FOR THE RTA WE SUPPORT AS AN EFFECTIVE, LOWER COST ANTI-TANK CAPABILITY THAN SEVERAL ALTERNATIVES WHICH HAVE BEEN UNDER CONSIDERATION. C-130 AIRCRAFT ARE INTENDED TO UPGRADE IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICAL LIFT CAPABILITY. HELICOPTER PURCHASES ARE PRIMARILY REPLACEMENTS FOR ATTRITION. OTHER POSSIBLE AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT WHICH HAS BEEN DISCUSSED, SUCH AS F-5ES OR A-37S, WOULD HAVE TO BE CASH PURCHASES.

11. ECONOMIC IMPACT. THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PROJECTED ACQUISITIONS, INCLUDING NON-U.S. PURCHASES, WOULD BE MODEST. THAILAND HAD A GNP OF 18.4 BILLION DOLLARS (CURRENT) IN 1977 AND HAS MAINTAINED A GDP GROWTH RATE IN EXCESS OF 7 PERCENT OVER THE PAST 16 YEARS. DESPITE A NEAR RECORD BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT OF \$377 MILLION IN 1977, RESERVES AT THE END OF THE YEAR WERE \$1.2 BILLION. THAILAND'S FOURTH FIVE-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN CALLS FOR AN EXPENDITURE OF 40 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL BUDGET FOR DEVELOPMENT. THE FY 78 BUDGET HAS EARMARKED

39.6 PERCENT FOR DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURES. THERE HAS SO FAR BEEN NO INDICATION THAT DEVELOPMENT PLANS ARE BEING SACRIFICED FOR MILITARY SPENDING. THAILAND'S CURRENT DEBT SERVICING RATIO FOR BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEBT IS 15.4 PERCENT. THE HIGHEST ESTIMATES OF DEFENSE ORIENTED BORROWING WOULD IMPACT ONLY MODERATELY ON DEBT SERVICING CAPABILITY. CASH PURCHASES WILL IMPACT DIRECTLY ON FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES, BUT WE DOUBT THAT WOULD DEPART MARKEDLY FROM ITS TRADITIONALLY CONSERVATIVE FOREIGN EXCHANGE MANAGEMENT. MAP TERMINATES IN FY 78. WHILE THERE IS NO ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATION FOR FURTHER

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GRANT ASSISTANCE, THAILAND HAS REAL DEFENSE NEEDS TO FULFILL ITS FORCE MODERNIZATION AND SELF SUFFICIENCY GOALS. WE BELIEVE THAT FOR AT LEAST THE NEXT FEW YEARS INFLATIONARY PRESSURES AND THE HIGH COST OF IMPORTED ENERGY PROVIDE ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATION FOR PROVIDING FMS FINANCING. THE EXPLOITATION OF THAILAND'S NATURAL GAS RESERVES BY THE EARLY 1980'S SHOULD EASE THE PRESENT PRESSURE ON FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES.

12. ARMS CONTROL IMPACT. THE PROPOSED FMS PURCHASES DO NOT IMPACT ON BASIC ARMS CONTROL RESTRAINTS. AS INDICATED ABOVE, THE MAJORITY OF THE PROJECTED ACQUISITIONS RELATES TO UNIT FILL AND REPLACEMENT ITEMS. THEY DO NOT REPRESENT NEW CAPABILITIES FOR THE REGION. THAI RECENTLY REQUESTED P AND B FOR F-16 AIRCRAFT, BUT THIS WAS REFUSED. WE HAVE RECOMMENDED THAT P AND B BE PROVIDED FOR THE F-16, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT SALE WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE AT THIS TIME OR IN THE NEAR TERM. THIS WOULD NOT INDEFINITELY FORECLOSE POSSIBILITY OF PROVIDING F-16 AT SOME FUTURE DATE, UNDER CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCE AND IT MIGHT REDUCE LIKELIHOOD OF THAILAND TURNING AT AN EARLY DATE TO THIRD COUNTRY PROCUREMENT OF HIGH PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT SIMILAR TO F-16. THAI ACQUISITIONS WOULD NOT AFFECT REGIONAL STABILITY NEGATIVELY. THAILAND HAS NOT BEEN CONSIDERED EVEN BY THE COMMUNIST NATIONS AS POSING AN OFFENSIVE THREAT TO THEIR SECURITY. BY BOLSTERING ITS OWN DEFENSES WITHOUT INTRODUCING ADVANCED LEVELS OF TECHNOLOGY AND MILITARY CAPABILITY, THAILAND ACTUALLY CONTRIBUTES TO REGIONAL SECURITY TO THE DEGREE THAT IT DISCOURAGES ANY EXTERNAL DESIGNS ON THAILAND.

13. HUMAN RIGHTS. THE THAI GOVERNMENT AT ALL LEVELS IS AWARE OF OUR CONCERN OVER HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE IMPLICATIONS IT HAS FOR SECURITY ASSISTANCE. WE BELIEVE

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THAT OUR EXPRESSED CONCERN ON HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS HAS
HAD MEASURABLE IMPACT WITH THE RTG. DEFENSE LAWYERS
HAVE BEEN PROVIDED FOR THE THAMMASAT 18. THERE IS
PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE TRIAL, AND THE DEFENSE AND PROSE-
CUTION ARE SEEKING AGREEMENT FOR SPEEDING UP THE
PROCEEDINGS. THE NUMBER OF PERSONS APPREHENDED UNDER
NARC ORDER 22 HAS DECREASED CONSIDERABLY. OUR SECURITY
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, WHILE ADHERING TO BASIC U.S. ARMS
LIMITATIONS GUIDELINES, WILL BEST ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS
OBJECTIVES BY TAILORING IT TO REAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE
NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY AS BEST WE CAN. THE KIND OF
POLITI POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE MOST CONDUCIVE TO THE PROMOTION OF

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HUMAN RIGHTS IS MOST LIKELY TO DEVELOP FROM A NATIONAL
SENSE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE NATION'S FUNDAMENTAL SECURITY.

TO THE DEGREE THAT THAILAND FEELS WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND OR ARE NOT TRULY CONCERNED ABOUT ITS BASIC SECURITY, THE CLIMATE FOR PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WILL NOT BE ENHANCED AS THE RTG WOULD INEVITABLY GIVE MORE ATTENTION TO NATIONAL SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS IN ITS POLITICAL DECISIONS.

14. OTHER ASSISTANCE. THAILAND RECEIVES NO MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER SOURCES. HOWEVER, THE THAI HAVE BEGUN EXPLORING THIRD COUNTRY PROCUREMENT SOURCES FOR DEFENSE SE ITEMS AS MANIFESTED IN THE RECENT \$100 MILLION PURCHASE OF SCORPION TANKS FROM THE U.K. THE THAI ARE CONSIDERING OTHER THIRD COUNTRY PURCHASES, BUT IN WHAT AMOUNTS OR ON WHAT TERMS REMAINS UNCLEAR. THE BULK OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE COMES FROM THE WORLD BANK AND JAPAN. IN 1977, THAILAND RECEIVED IN LOANS OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SOME DOLS370 MILLION IN AID. PRINCIPAL DONORS WERE:

JAPAN DOLS 151 MILLION
IBRD " 130 MILLION
ADB " 48 MILLION
U.S. " 14 MILLION
AUSTRALIA " 9.5 MILLION
UNDP " 2.7 MILLION
NEW ZEALAND " 1.7 MILLION
U.K. " 1 MILLION

15. COUNTRY PROGRAMS (IN THOUSANDS U.S. DOLLARS).

A. MINIMUM LEVEL

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B. INTERMEDIATE

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FMS 23,010 23,000 23,000
IMET 700 700 700

C. BASIC

FY 80 FY 81 FY 82

FMS 30,000 30,000 30,000

IMET 900 900 900

D. INCREMENTAL

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FMS 50,000 50,000 50,000

IMET 1,100 1,100 1,100

16. RISK/BENEFIT ASSESSMENT

A. IMET

(1) MINIMUM. AT MINIMUM LEVEL, IMET FUNDING WOULD PROVIDE CONUS TRAINING FOR APPROXIMATELY 60 ROYAL THAI ARMED FORCES (RTARF) OFFICERS PER YEAR AND WOULD FOCUS PRIMARILY ON THE CURRENT AND PROJECTED LEADERSHIP OF THE RTARF. IT WOULD PRECLUDE IMPORTANT MID-LEVEL TRAINING DESIGNED TO HELP THE THAI ACHIEVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN

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AREAS SUCH AS LOGISTICS, COMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORTATION, FINANCE, PERSONNEL, INTELLIGENCE AND COMPUTER OPERATIONS. FAILURE TO PROVIDE THIS TRAINING WOULD HAVE A DEFINITE, NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT OF THE RTARF. IN ADDITION, ALL HIGHLY SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL TRAINING NOW BEING PROVIDED FOR THE RTARF, ALL INSTRUCTOR TRAINING, ALL COUNTERINSURGENCY TRAINING, ALL BASIC TECH TRAINING FOR THE ROYAL THAI NAVY, AND ALL FLYING RELATED TRAINING WOULD BE ELIMINATED. ELIMINATION OF THESE COURSES, WHICH ARE CONSIDERED VITAL TO UPGRADING RTARF, WILL ULTIMATELY HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE QUALITY OF THE RTARF. THIS IS CONSIDERED THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM WHICH

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WOULD ALLOW US TO MAINTAIN ANY DEGREE OF THE INFLUENCE WHICH WE NOW HAVE WITH THE LEADERSHIP AND MID-CAREER OFFICERS.

(2) INTERMEDIATE. THIS WOULD PROVIDE CONUS TRAINING FOR AN ADDITIONAL 40 RTARF OFFICERS PER YEAR AND WOULD INCLUDE ALL OF THE PROFESSIONAL AND ADVANCED COURSES OF THE MINIMUM LEVEL PLUS SUCH COURSES AS LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT, COMMUNICATIONS, INTELLIGENCE, FLIGHT SAFETY, TRANSPORTATION, CIVIL AFFAIRS, AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS PLANNING, RIVERINE OPERATIONS, COUNTERINSURGENCY AND INSTRUCTOR TRAINING. WHILE THIS WOULD ALLOW MID-LEVEL MANAGERS IN THE RTARF TO ACQUIRE AND IMPROVE THEIR SKILLS IN THESE CRITICAL AREAS, THERE WOULD NOT BE ANY MANAGEMENT TRAINING IN THOSE AREAS THAT NOW RECEIVE EMPHASIS IN ORDER TO EVENTUALLY ACHIEVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY, SUCH AS FOLLOW-ON INSTRUCTOR COURSES FOR THE REGENERATION OF SKILLS. THIS WOULD NEGATE SOME GAINS ALREADY REALIZED AND WOULD HAVE A DEFINITE, NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE LONG TERM CAPABILITIES ON THE RTARF. THE INTERMEDIATE LEVEL WOULD REQUIRE DELETION OF THREE INSTRUCTOR PILOT TRAINING SPACES FOR THE RTAF WHICH ARE CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL FOR UPGRADING THE OVERALL QUALITY AND COMBAT READINESS OF THE RTAF.

(3) BASIC. CONSIDERING PROJECTED COURSE COST INCREASES, THIS LEVEL OF FUNDING WOULD PROVIDE CONUS TRAINING FOR AN ADDITIONAL 40-50 OFFICERS OVER THE INTERMEDIATE LEVEL BUT WOULD MEAN A REDUCTION OF 25-30 STUDENTS FROM THE FY 79 LEVEL. ESSENTIALLY, THIS TRAINING PROGRAM WOULD CONTAIN ALL THE TYPES OF COURSES INCLUDED IN THE CURRENT IMETP AND A VERY LIMITED AMOUNT OF TECHNICAL TRAINING FOR HIGHLY SPECIALIZED COURSES. THE 25-30 STUDENT REDUCTION

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WOULD NECESSARILY ELIMINATE ALL ENLISTED TECHNICAL TRAINING FOR THE RTN, ALL LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR REFRESHER TRAINING, AND ALL GRADUATE LEVEL TRAINING. THIS LEVEL IS THE MINIMUM REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN AN EFFECTIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM ABLE TO MEET THAI TRAINING REQUIREMENTS. THE INSTRUCTOR TRAINING, INCLUDED IN THIS LEVEL, IS ESSENTIAL TO KEEP THE RTAF FLYING TRAINING PROGRAM ABREAST OF LATEST PROCEDURES AND PROVIDES A HIGH RETURN FOR THE INVESTMENT. WITHOUT THIS TRAINING, RTAF COMBAT CAPABILITIES WILL BE DAMAGED OVER THE LONGER TERM.

(4) INCREMENTAL. THIS FUNDING LEVEL WOULD OFFSET PROJECTED COURSE COST INCREASES AND ALLOW THE THAI SECURITY ASSISTANCE TRAINING PROGRAM TO MAINTAIN A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE IMETP EQUAL TO FY 79 LEVEL. ALL REQUIRED TRAINING COULD BE INCLUDED AT THIS LEVEL. IT WOULD ALLOW RETENTION OF THE DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE TRAINING DETACHMENT FOR THE JUSMAGTHAI TRAINING STAFF AND NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL OR AFIT ALLOCATIONS COULD BE INCREASED TO ONE SPACE FOR EACH SERVICE. A LIMITED AMOUNT OF ENLISTED TECHNICAL TRAINING WOULD ALSO BE RETAINED FOR THE RTN TO ENHANCE THEIR IN-COUNTRY INSTRUCTIONAL CAPABILITIES. FAILURE TO INCREASE THE THAI IMETP BUDGET TO THE INCREMENTAL LEVEL WILL RESULT IN 25-30 LESS CONUS TRAINEES PER YEAR. THIS REDUCTION IN TRAINING ALLOCATIONS FOR EACH SERVICE WILL IMPACT ON OVERALL THAI EFFORTS TOWARD SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN MANY TECHNICAL AREAS. THE RTARF SEES THE IMET PROGRAM AS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF OUR OVERALL SECURITY RELATIONSHIP. ANY REDUCTION IN THE PROGRAM WILL, ASIDE FROM ITS IMPACT ON RTARF DEVELOPMENT PLANS, BE INTERPRETED AS A SIGN OF U.S. DISINTEREST IN THAILAND'S SECURITY.

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(1) MINIMUM. \$15 MILLION ALLOWS ONLY TOKEN AMOUNTS OF

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 MCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
L-03 H-01 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 ACDA-12 EB-08
TRSE-00 OMB-01 HA-05 DLOS-09 COME-00 MMO-01 IO-13
/106 W

-----038569 241919Z /50

P 241604Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8186

INFO DA WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

CNO WASHDC

CSAF WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

CMC WASHDC

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

TOKYO FOR AMBASSADOR ABRAMOWITZ

EQUIPMENT TO BE PURCHASED. WITH A SMALL AMOUNT OF CREDIT APPLIED TO AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT (UH-1H, C-130H), THE BALANCE WOULD BE APPLIED FOR TROOP TRANSPORT, MINOR COMMUNICATIONS AND SMALL ARMS. THIS TOKEN LEVEL RISKS UNDERMINING SIGNIFICANTLY THAILAND'S CONFIDENCE IN THE UNITED STATES' READINESS TO PLAY EVEN A LIMITED SECURITY ROLE IN THE AREA. IT WOULD INCREASE THAI GEOGRAPHIC AND POLITICAL VULNERABILITY AND WOULD BE IMMEDIATELY INTERPRETED BY THAILAND'S NEIGHBORS, ASEAN ALLIES AND COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS ALIKE, AS A DESTABILIZING SIGN OF U.S. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE AREA. IT COULD ENCOURAGE BOLDER ACTION BY THE INDOCHINA STATES AT SOME FUTURE POINT AND

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WOULD PLACE A GREATER STRAIN OF THAI ABILITY TO FINANCE BOTH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MILITARY REQUIREMENTS. MAJOR EQUIPMENT ACQUISITIONS NECESSARY TO CONTINUE MILITARY DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS A SELF-SUFFICIENT FORCE CAPABLE OF SUSTAINED DETERRENCE WOULD BE DELAYED AND CREATE A POTENTIALLY DESTABILIZING IMBALANCE WITH THAILAND'S NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES.

(2) INTERMEDIATE. AT THE INTERMEDIATE LEVEL, CONTINUING REPLACEMENT SUPPORT OF SOME INVESTMENT ITEMS TO REPLACE COMBAT LOSSES, OLD AND WORN EQUIPMENT AND TOE DEFICIENCIES WOULD BE PROVIDED. MORE CREDIT WOULD BE APPLIED TO INTENDED C-130H PURCHASE. A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE FUNDING WOULD PROBABLY BE APPLIED TO PURCHASING TRUCKS. THE NEGATIVE IMPACT AT THIS LEVEL MIGHT BE MORE PSYCHOLOGICAL THAN REAL IN TERMS OF MILITARY READINESS. A REDUCTION IN CREDITS TO THE COUNTRY PERCEIVED BY FRIENDLY NATIONS IN THE REGION AS KEY TO REGIONAL SECURITY WOULD UNDERMINE CONFIDENCE IN U.S. INTENTIONS TO PLAY AN ACTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING SECURITY AND STABILITY IN SEA. THE RTG AND THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP MIGHT ALSO QUESTION WHAT ADVANTAGES ARE TO BE DERIVED FROM THEIR CLOSE COOPERATION WITH US IN SUCH KEY AREAS AS INTELLIGENCE, NARCOTICS, AND REFUGEES. IF THE RTAF TURNS TO OTHER NATIONS FOR PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT, AS THEY HAVE SHOWN AN INCREASING TENDENCY TO DO, SUPPORT OF NONUNIFORM EQUIPMENT WILL FURTHER BURDEN THE RTAF LOGISTICS SYSTEM.

(3) BASIC. MAINTAINING THE CURRENT LEVEL OF FMS CREDIT FINANCING WILL ALLOW THE RTAF TO PURCHASE, AT FAVORABLE RATES, MAJOR TOE DEFICIENCIES OR REPLACE OBSOLETE/ UNSERVICEABLE ITEMS IN A MANNER CONDUCIVE TO GOOD

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LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT. IT WOULD ALLOW FOR ADDITIONAL CREDIT TO BE APPLIED TO C-130H PURCHASE AND SOME DEGREE OF UPGRADING FOR THE RTN AIR WING. IT WILL ASSIST IN THE RTMC PROPOSED EXPANSION PROGRAM. THIS LEVEL WILL HELP SUSTAIN OUR PRESENT, RELATIVELY HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP. IT DOES REPRESENT, HOWEVER, DECREASED PURCHASING POWER AND WOULD NOT BE RESPONSIVE TO RTG REQUESTS FOR INCREASED CREDITS TO OFFSET THE TERMINATION OF MAP. THE DECREASING RELEVANCE OF FMS CREDITS AT THIS LEVEL, IN THE FACE OF SKYROCKETING PRICES OF WEAPONS SYSTEMS, WILL PROBABLY INCREASE THE TENDENCY TOWARD THIRD COUNTRY PURCHASES, RESULTING IN WASTE AND MULTIPLE LOGISTICS SYSTEMS. MAINTENANCE OF FMS CREDITS AT LEAST AT THIS LEVEL IS NECESSARY TO PREVENT EROSION OF CONFIDENCE IN U.S. INTENTIONS.

(4) INCREMENTAL. THIS WILL ALLOW THE RTAF TO ACCELERATE ITS EXPANSION PROGRAM. THE SERVICES WOULD BE ABLE TO PURCHASE MOST TOE DEFICIENCIES AND REPLACE SOME OBSOLETE EQUIPMENT. THE RTN AIR WING COULD BE UPGRADED SLIGHTLY AND ADDITIONAL CREDITS COULD BE APPLIED TO C-130H AIRCRAFT FOR THE RTAF. IT WOULD STILL NOT ALLOW FOR

FINANCING OF ANY COMBATANT SHIPS FOR THE RTN. THIS LEVEL WOULD SERVE AS A SIGN OF U.S. SUPPORT FOR THAILAND AND OF OUR INTEREST IN REGIONAL SECURITY. IT WOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO REQUEST BY THE PRIME MINISTER, AND IT WOULD MORE REALISTICALLY REFLECT THE AMOUNT OF CREDIT REQUIRED BY THE THAIS TO PURCHASE EQUIPMENT TO COUNTER THE THREAT WHICH THEY FACE. ALTHOUGH, EVEN AT THIS LEVEL, IT REPRESENTS ONLY ABOUT 5 PERCENT OF THE RTARF BUDGET, IT WOULD HELP THE THAI SERVICES MEET THEIR GOALS IN A MORE TIMELY FASHION AND EASE THE BURDEN OF CASH PURCHASES.

17. MANNING LEVELS. PROPOSED MANNING LEVEL FOR JUSMAGTHAI FOR FY 79 IS 35 U.S. MILITARY, 5 U.S. CIVILIAN AND 10 LOCAL. RECOMMENDED LEVELS FOR THE OUT

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YEARS AT THE VARIOUS PROGRAM LEVELS WILL BE PROVIDED

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L-03 H-01 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 ACDA-12 EB-08
TRSE-00 OMB-01 HA-05 DLOS-09 COME-00 MMO-01 IO-13
/106 W

-----039082 241920Z /50

P 241604Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8187

INFO DA WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

CNO WASHDC

CSAF WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

CMC WASHDC

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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SEPTEL.

18. IMET TRAINING. ASSUMING CONTINUATION OF THE BASIC LEVEL OF \$900 THOUSAND ANNUALLY FOR IMET IN FY 80, FY 81 AND FY 82, WE ESTIMATE CONUS TRAINING FOR 150, 140 AND 130 STUDENTS RESPECTIVELY FOR THOSE YEARS. PRIMARILY TRAINING WILL CONSIST OF MOMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF OFFICER COURSE, AIR COMMAND STAFF COLLEGE, NAVAL STAFF COURSE, NAVAL COMMAND COLLEGE, INTERNATIONAL DEFENSE MANAGEMENT, LOGISTICS EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT, AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL AND ADVANCED COURSES.

19. ANTICIPATED REQUIREMENTS. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF

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FACTORS WHICH IN OUR JUDGEMENT STRONGLY SUPPORT CONTINUED SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO THAILAND OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS AT NO LESS THAN CURRENT LEVELS. FOLLOWING A DRAMATIC REDUCTION AND EVENTUAL PHASE-OUT OF U.S. GRANT ASSISTANCE OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, THAILAND MUST NOW PROCURE ALL ITS MILITARY EQUIPMENT THROUGH FMS CREDITS OR CASH PURCHASES. THAILAND FACES THE CONTINUING THREAT OF AN INTERNAL COMMUNIST INSURGENCY WHICH RECEIVES IMPORTANT EXTERNAL SUPPORT AND THE LONGER TERM THREAT POSED BY VIETNAM. THAILAND HAS LONG BEEN FRIENDLY AND COOPERATIVE PARTNER IN OUR ENDEAVORS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. WE COULD HARDLY EXPECT MORE FROM THAILAND IN TERMS OF PRESENT COOPERATION IN THE NARCOTICS AND REFUGEE FIELDS. ADDITIONALLY, THAILAND HAS NOW BECOME A KEY FOCAL POINT FOR SINO/SOVIET/VIETNAM/CAMBODIA DIPLOMATIC MANEUVERS. UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, THAILAND OCCUPIES A MUCH MORE FAVORABLE POSITION THAN MOST PROGNOSTICATORS WOULD HAVE PREDICTED TWO OR THREE YEARS AGO. IT IS IMPORTANT TO THAILAND, ASEAN AND U.S. REGIONAL INTERESTS THAT WE DO NOT RPT NOT TAKE ACTIONS THAT WOULD BE PERCEIVED AS SIGNS OF WANING U.S. INTEREST, WHICH WOULD THEREBY WEAKEN THAILAND'S PRESENT POSITION AND INDUCE EVEN MORE UNCERTAINTIES INTO THE ALREADY COMPLEX SOUTHEAST ASIA/ INDOCHINA SITUATION.

20. U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE IS OF IMMEASURABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE TO THAILAND. ALTHOUGH THE WORST EXPECTATIONS OF A FEW YEARS AGO HAVE NOT BEEN REALIZED, THAILAND'S SENSE OF CONFIDENCE, WHILE GROWING STRONGER, REMAINS FRAGILE. THE SAME CAN BE SAID FOR FRIENDLY, NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES' CONFIDENCE IN THAILAND. IN MAKING OUR DECISIONS ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE FOR THAILAND,

THE IMPORTANCE WHICH IS ATTACHED TO IT BY THAILAND

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AND ITS NEIGHBORS SHOULD BE CAREFULLY WEIGHED. THE
IMPACT OF A REDUCTION IN OUR MODEST SECURITY ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM WOULD IMPACT SHARPLY ACROSS THE FULL RANGE
OF OUR BILATERAL AND REGION INTERESTS AND WOULD ADVERSELY
AFFECT THE PRESENTLY EVOLVING POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS
IN ASIA.

21. IDEALLY, THEREFORE, WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE SLIGHT
INCREASES IN BOTH FMS CREDITS AND IMET FOR THAILAND THAT
WOULD AT LEAST COMPENSATE FOR INFLATIONARY PRESSURES,
WHICH SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE THE IMPACT OF OUR PROGRAMS
AT PRESENT DOLLAR LEVELS. RECOGNIZING, HOWEVER, THAT
BUDGET LIMITATIONS MAKE REMOTE THE POSSIBILITY OF EVEN
SLIGHT INCREASES, WE ESTIMATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FOR
FY 80, FY 81 AND FY 82 AT \$30 MILLION FOR FMS CREDITS
AND \$900 THOUSAND FOR IMET. IF A MODEST INCREASE IN
FMS CREDITS SHOULD PROVE AT ALL POSSIBLE, WE FEEL IT IS
JUSTIFIED BY THE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES EXISTING IN
INDOCHINA AT THIS TIME AND BY OUR BILATERAL AND
REGIONAL INTERESTS. O'DONOHUE

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